



Issue 4 – Jan 2024

The Grapevine

Taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalm 34:8)

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*Faith
Hope
&
Love*

**“I am the vine; you are the branches”
(John 15:5)**

Shining a light on the Church in the 21st Century



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Welcome Everyone

New Year! New Hope! Welcome to the 4th issue of The Grapevine! This is produced by the 3 Churches in North Cardiff with contributions from the wider community – both near and far.

The content reflects 'faith, hope and love', in the 21st century. Church is more than a building; it's a community & it's people. One body in Christ.



One of U2's songs is called: 'I still haven't found what I'm looking for'. This is never more relevant in a turbulent world. This issue focuses on partnership, peace, the power of prayer and reading the Bible in 4 minutes...find your way.



Prior issues are on: www.3churches.org or enjoy reading and sharing via the QR code.

Contact us: grapevinepublication@gmail.com

Calling all readers!

We would like to regularly publish readers' emails on your reflections on any current or former articles e.g.

What are your views? What did you enjoy reading? What inspired you? What surprised you? What would you like to see more of or less of?

Let us know via the email above.



2024 is the time

Leeds-based Paul Lancaster ([Hope for the Nations](#)) notes that the turn of the year is a time to look forward. We may already know of things planned to happen (e.g. family events) but what about things that come our way unexpectedly – how can we be ready for those situations? Some might say – we can't possibly be ready, since we don't know – just take 1 day at a time.

There was a recent story of a man, living near the River Severn, who prevented his house from flooding by building a protective wall around it. This reminds us of the parable of the two foundations (Matthew 7: 24-27). The clue lies in Jesus' words that anyone who follows his teaching is wise. Yes, storms will come unexpectedly into our lives but we can be like the wise man, who built his house on rock, and be more grounded in God's words.

Emelyne Burkhard ([All Nations Church, Cardiff](#)), continues... We live in seasons but seasons, like chapters, are Biblical:

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens (Ecclesiastes 3:1). The Greeks had two measures of time - Chronos and Kairos. **Chronos** being a quantitative amount of time, like a day, week, month, year. **Kairos**, however, is an opportune time, a given moment or appointed season...

This photo speaks of the Kairos time. The photographer had the opportune time, after studying Moon and weather for 3 years. Then suddenly - all comes into alignment.



Photo: Leonardo Sens / @leosens

We might have to move ourselves, re-focus, clean or position the lens, - do what we can do in our hands... But also let God do what's in His hands. Depend on Christ and exercise trust, for when you least expect it, it can be His perfect timing. Happy New Year and God Bless.

Song for Peace

Hello. My name is Ami. I am from Cardiff, Wales, UK. In November 2022, I released a song in conjunction with Joe Pope and Simon Williams, called: '**A Prayer for Peace**'. It is a tribute to the outbreak of the war against Ukraine and a song that I wanted people to be able to reflect on and relate to. The lyrics reflect my faith, whereby I hope and pray to the 'God of love' and 'God of earth' that one day, we as a global nation can be restored to harmoniously live in peace.



The song can be found on:

<https://spoti.fi/3TZllqG> or You Tube at

<https://bit.ly/48NR5bM>



How much more must we endure
In this our modern world?
Why divide? Instead unite
To fight the fight and spread the light.

When war is done, life will be bright
Peace on Earth, the cause of right
Let's join hands, each day we pray
Restore the peace, life won't be grey.

A prayer for peace to reign supreme
And hope to warm our hearts.
God of love, God of Earth
Restore us all to live life as one.

How much more must we endure
With what is on the news?
Why spread fear instead of cheer
What can help us beat these blues?

Song for Peace

There's so much that we can do
Bring hope, bring joy and courage too.
Believing in goodwill to all
A world protected, will stand tall.

A prayer for peace to reign supreme
And hope to warm our hearts.
God of love. God of Earth
Restore us all to live life as one.

A prayer for peace to reign supreme
And hope to warm our hearts.
God of love, God of Earth
Restore us all to live life as one.



As we are all aware, Ukraine is not the only other country at war. The conflict in Gaza and Israel is also an open wound, impacting on ordinary people.

According to worldpopulationreview.com there are 32 countries currently at war (including civil war), so our prayers for peace must go far and wide.

Someone once said: "If war is an interruption between two periods of peace, it is equally true that peace is an interval between two wars."

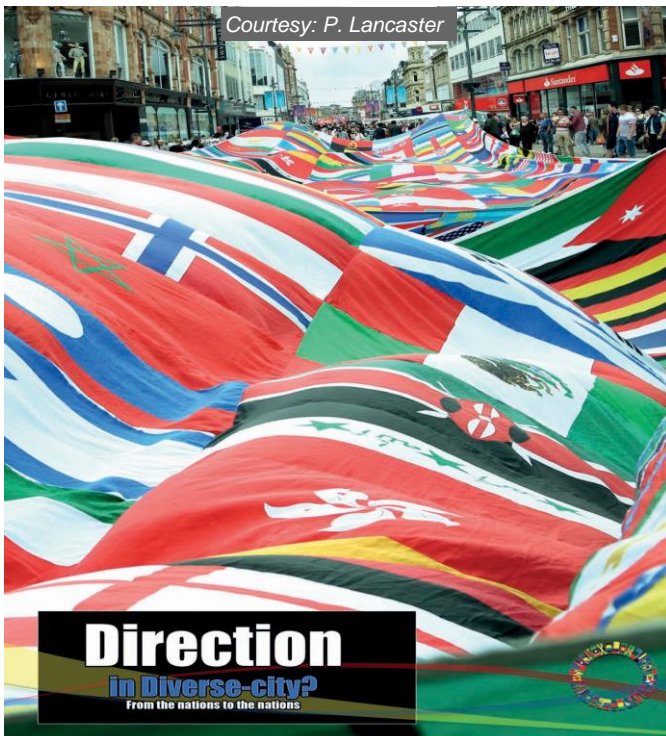
More pointedly, John Lennon (a former Beatle) said: "Give peace a chance." The Editor would be interested in hearing readers' reflections on any of the current wars and how peace can be achieved.

On a lighter note, the Editor would welcome any images of artwork, drawings or writing that interprets Lennon's words. Peace is challenging but is possible. Who would have thought that the Good Friday Agreement would happen or that Greenham Common, which once housed American nuclear missiles, is now a nature reserve and public parkland?

Flying the Flag

Seeking peace includes trust, respecting different traditions, sharing, coming together and celebrating what unites us.

Although it was 10 years ago, a report by Paul Lancaster (Hope for the Nations) captured a turning point, in Leeds, when the city came together inter-culturally (and continues to do so). This article is an abridged version of **Direction in Diverse-city**. It is reproduced now because it offers pointers to a more harmonious and Christ-like world, by starting local.



A related aim of the report was to create awareness about the international diversity of Christian witness in Leeds...

Over 20 years ago a small group of leaders representing black majority African-Caribbean and white churches, came together, to find a new level of reconciliation. After much discussion and prayer a public act of reconciliation took place in Millennium Square in 2004.

There are more than 120 nations represented in Leeds and they wanted to depict how they were coming together. As a result, a flag (20 metres by 5 metres), of all the nations, was stitched together by a Congolese refugee whose husband had been martyred for his faith.

This flag has been used in various settings (e.g. football stadiums, Leeds Civic Hall and Leeds Trinity shopping centre), annually at Global Day of Prayer, for the last 20 years.

Flying the Flag

A process began with the desire to find a mission together as an international congregation. This focused on creatively sharing the good news and a desire to transform lives and communities.

This has been supported via four cross-cultural initiatives:

- 1) **Global Day of Prayer** – an international prayer movement
- 2) **Hope for the Nations** (HFTN) – a network of 40 different nationalities, congregations and mission groups.
- 3) **Together Everyone Achieves More** (TEAM) – a network of African churches across Leeds / other towns.
- 4) **Unity in Mission** – a local network of mainly African churches.

The report described the activities that underpin these initiatives along with a range of other stakeholders (e.g. from the University Chaplaincy to businesses), who are working inter-culturally. What is more challenging are the questions raised....

These questions are relevant to places that have culturally diverse populations e.g. in Cardiff only 47% of people described themselves as Welsh with almost 10% Asian-related and 4% Black, Caribbean & African ethnicity (2021).

Some of the questions, for the Christian churches in Cardiff, prompted by the Leeds report could be:

- To what extent do predominantly white and black churches work together?
- How do we embrace different cultures in our worship and outreach?
- How do we interact with Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities?

A church the Grapevine Editor visited in Wokingham has a very simple example of embracing other cultures (50%+ were not born in the UK), by inviting everyone to say the ***Our Father*** in their native tongue.

One Body, therefore, is more than different Christian churches coming together; it's cultures, too.

Three Steps to Heaven

James Powell is a member of the Vineyard Church, Cardiff. This is his testimony:

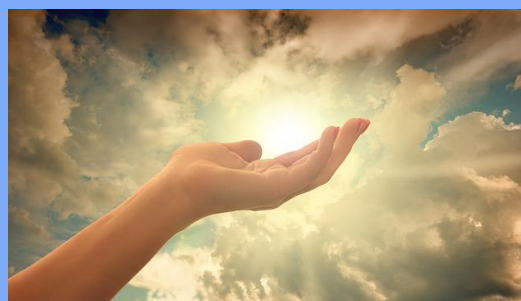
After leaving home at the age of 14, following an intimate spiritual encounter with Christ, I spent 12 years immersed in truth and prayer until, at the age of 26, I travelled abroad for the first time and became an international volunteer for charities and NGOs.

Spending three years shared between Albania and South Korea, I met my wife-to-be. We have been married almost 14 years and have gratefully welcomed two wonderful children, a son and a daughter, into this world.



But it was not an easy path and it may have been that I would not be here to tell you this. **You see, in 2012 I was diagnosed with cancer for the first time and, over the course of three years, experienced a further two.**

However, I didn't jump into chemotherapy. Rather, following an initial operation, I attended six-monthly checkups and went to one of my appointments, two months early, because I heard God telling me to go. Sadly, the cancer returned. They told me that the fastest they'd seen cancer grow was doubling per week but mine was tripling, and that I urgently needed 'chemo'.



Asking God what to do, I followed a more natural alternative. Upon returning to the oncologists they now told me I didn't need 'chemo', due to my natural healing. God, however, guided me to do it and I unusually experienced no pain or fatigue.

At this time, I was unable to work and my wife was still in Albania. Without an income I was unable to support her and, according to the multiple visa rejections we received, our marriage was not enough.

Three Steps to Heaven

It would be 7 years after our marriage until we were able to live together. Before we could though, I did chemotherapy a second time when the third diagnosis was delivered. Asking God how to solve this, once and for all, I gave up a bad habit and the cancer disappeared in less than a week.



The oncologist and his team couldn't believe it, exclaiming that such fast healing was impossible. He even wrote on my medical notes that the numbers from the test were wrong and that they needed to do the test again. One week later the new results confirmed a big fat zero, again. I was shortly dismissed from hospital without the specialists able to explain how such rapid healing had occurred.

After another unsuccessful visa application, my wife and I met and

stayed in The Netherlands for 3 years. But the double chemo had wrecked my fertility. I had twice the normal amount of sperm previously but after the treatment I had a grand total of only five swimmers remaining. Yet again the medical experts used the 'impossible' word and said we would never have kids.

In addition, my wife has always suffered from nightmares about losing a baby. Again, we turned to God with a special prayer over forty days. At the end of the forty days, my wife stopped having her nightmares and we found out we were pregnant with our first child, thanks to God!



We eventually made it to the UK and have since been blessed with a boy. Even when things seemed hopeless I never lost faith. This journey of healing and being blessed with family has continued and now led me to starting **DiscernersChurch.com**. Three steps to Heaven. Amen!

Through Children's Eyes

Who or what is God and why does it matter? These are big questions that have confronted people for centuries.

Voltaire, the French philosopher, famously said: "If God did not exist it would be necessary to invent Him."

Likewise, anyone watching a David Attenborough programme cannot fail to marvel at the complexity and beauty of nature and ponder how this happened. If it was the result of the 'Big Bang', when the Earth was created, who ignited the spark for evolution?

The opening sequence of the 2020 film, **Worth**, based on the true events surrounding the compensation for victims of 9/11, included a relative saying that they were angry with God (even though men flew the planes).

In contrast, Bob Hope (a comedian) jokingly said that he never met an atheist in a bunker! Questions and yet more questions, however, the Bible can help us understand who God is when it refers to all of us as God's children...



For example, Vickie and Bernard Adshead, parishioners of Christ the King (Llanishen, Cardiff), were given an explanation of God via friends in Penarth Methodist Church. This was homework from 8 years old Danny Dutton, who lives in Chula Vista ('**Beautiful View**'), California:

'One of God's main jobs is making people. He makes them to replace the ones that die, so there will be enough people to take care of things on earth. He doesn't make grown-ups, just babies. I think because they are smaller and easier to make. That way he doesn't have to take up his valuable time teaching them to talk and walk. He can just leave that to parents.'

Through Children's Eyes

God's second most important job is listening to prayers. An awful lot of this goes on, since some people, like preachers, pray at times beside bedtime. God doesn't have time to listen to radio or TV because of this. Because he hears everything, there must be an awful lot of noise, unless he has thought of a way to turn it off.

Jesus is God's son. He used to do all the hard work, like walking on water and performing miracles and trying to teach the people who didn't want to learn about God. They finally got tired of him preaching to them and crucified him. But he was good and kind, like his father, and he told his father they didn't know what they were doing and to forgive them and God said "OK".

And God did not let Jesus stay in the grave and raised him from the dead. And his dad (God) appreciated everything that he had done and all his hard work on earth so he told him he didn't have to go out on the road anymore. He could stay in heaven.

So, he did. And now he helps out listening to prayers and seeing things which are important for God to take care of and which ones he can take care of himself. You can pray any time and they are sure to help you because they have got it worked out so that one is on duty, all the time.

Don't skip church to do something you think will be more fun like going to the beach. This is wrong. And besides the sun doesn't come out at the beach until noon anyway. If you don't believe in God you will be very lonely, because parents can't go everywhere with you, like camp, but God can. It is good to know He's around you when you're scared, in the dark or when you can't swim. But...you shouldn't just always think of what God can do for you. I figure God put me here and he can take me back anytime he pleases. That's why I believe in God!'

Try to discover God, like Danny, by exploring the real life of Jesus or how people have experienced Him.

St. Illtyd's

St Illtyd's Catholic High School, Cardiff, marked its centenary last year and began doing so with a Mass at St Albans Catholic Church in Splott, Cardiff. St Albans was the local church closest to the school's original site and all were made welcome by Father Sebastian and the Oratory.



Archbishop Mark O'Toole was the main celebrant but he was also joined by fellow priests, many of whom were themselves Old Illtydians. It was a wonderful opportunity for all past pupils and staff to share their own memories of the school and suffice to say a lot has changed.

We were also delighted that Brother Michael and Brother Ben, of the De La Salle family of brothers, could join us. Brother Ben spoke of his own time and memories of St Illtyd's and this was a theme carried on the next day at the school itself where Mass was celebrated by Archbishop George Stack and Father Brian Gray, Chair of Governors.

The Mass took place in the Chapel where we were also joined by Mrs Hart, the Headteacher of St John Lloyd and her pupils and staff. The Chapel was a part of the Brothers' lodgings when they were ever present in the school. It was great to have Brother Michael and Brother Ben with us. They helped to reinforce our rich history and association with Lasallian education, and we hope that it is the first of many visits.

St. Illtyd's

The Chaplaincy Team at St Illtyd's meet weekly in the Chapel with our chaplain, Mrs Wonnacott. Their focus has been to continue to strengthen our wonderful relationship with our feeder primary schools & charities within our community.

Together in Christ, we make a difference

They worked closely with our Youth Action Groups to promote the Harvest Foodbank within our school. Thanks to the generosity of our students and their families we were able to donate a number of food parcels to our local community food banks, Rumney Forum and Llanrumney Hall as well as a food parcel for the Saint Vincent De Paul (SVP) Centre, in Ely Bridge.



Students are starting to experience retreats again and we invited Mary Immaculate High School, where students enjoyed leading the worship and a variety of activities. Year 7 had their Welcome Mass at the beginning of the autumn term and enjoyed their first experience of a retreat, too. They explored what their responsibilities are as stewards of the school to our local, global and spiritual communities.

During October the Year 11 SVP group organised the CAFOD Family Fast Day. They raised money and awareness for the campaign by making and serving soup to students and staff during their Wednesday break times. Their homemade soup was so delicious that they sold out completely!

Not a minute to spare?

Instant coffee, fast food, speed-networking, texting, 24/7 news...the list goes on. Life can sometimes feel like a combination of being too busy, rushing and paradoxically, at the same time, wanting everything immediately.

Prioritisation informs us to do the things that are most important and urgent, first. Matthew (6:33) encourages us to:

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God

How many of us, however, in our hectic lives, put this into action? Perhaps, there are some small steps we can take such as reading the Bible in 4 minutes:



This is a spoken word animation, written and narrated by poet and storyteller Dai Wooldridge. To find out more about the work of the Bible Society please visit:

www.biblesociety.org.uk.

Another step could be to access the **Lectio 365** app for a 10 minutes inspiring devotional at the start and end of the day. This also asks you to listen to a passage for a particular word or phrase the Holy Spirit is highlighting to you in that moment.

As a person who has a hard time getting my mind to stop racing this app is a huge blessing

Similarly, have you considered sending a daily short line of scripture, to a loved one; perhaps, over your lunch break? We find the time to service the car, cut the grass and go to the dentist - but are we tending to the things that really matter? Maybe, take a minute to reflect.

What's Happening in the Neighbourhood?

WELCOME SPACE

Christ the King Parish Centre
Newborough Avenue
Llanishen

**Every Wednesday
from 11am**

Free Tea, Coffee, Hot & Cold Snacks

Crafts, Board Games, Books, Newspapers, Music,
Sustainable Clothes & Free Wi-Fi
OR
Just come along for a chat & catch-up



New for September - Singalong Sessions, Keepfit/
Tai Chi, Reflexology, Guest Speakers!

YOUR LOCAL NEW WELCOME SPACE



Looking for work - can you help?

One of St. Brigid's (North Cardiff) Food Market guests is a Sri Lankan lady, who speaks Tamil and a little English. Rajila has been here for 2 years, lives locally and is looking for work.

She has been a seamstress for 25 years: making and mending women's and children's clothes. When we last saw her she was wearing a beautiful self-made dress!

If you can offer Rajila any work, or a job, please call either **Callista (07738 264 176)** or **Tania (07549 937 812)**.

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UPCYCLE /RECYCLE

REDUCE WASTE

REDUCE CARBON

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OF THE MONTH
1pm – 5PM**

AT CHRIST THE KING PARISH CENTRE, NEWBOROUGH AVENUE, CF14 5AA

What's Happening in the Nation?

The **Eternal Wall of Answered Prayer** is a national Christian monument being raised in the heart of the UK (Coleshill, the Midlands), reaching 50m into the sky. It will be a wall with 1 million bricks reflecting 1 million stories of answered prayers. The aim of the project is to **Make Hope Visible**. Find out more here: www.eternalwall.org.uk or click on the short video below:



Psalm 9:1 says: **‘I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of the marvellous things you have done’.**

People from 125 nations have begun to share their or someone else's stories of answered prayer. Here is just one of them: I was kayaking the Caledonia Canal with my best friend, who is an atheist. We arrived at Loch Ness, to find the weather was bad. We had planned to camp around 20km up the Loch, but it was looking impossible to make that sort of



distance in these conditions. We carried the twin kayak to our launch point, and I asked my friend to wait whilst I prayed. I played the worship song "It is well" with the lyrics "the waves and wind still know His name" and prayed that God would lead us through the waves and wind. We set off and made incredible progress, despite the weather - at one point my friend shouted over the wind: "it feels like we have a third man paddling with us!" - I shouted back, "we do!". We ended up kayaking almost 30km, much more than our original expectation. God was truly with us that day, and I like to think it made my friend think twice about his atheism. Later we saw what could only have been a stand-up-paddleboarder in the middle of the loch, but it looked like he was walking on water. It just felt like God was with us.

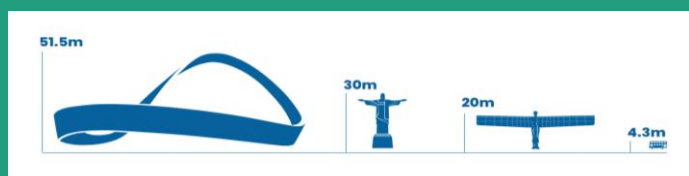
What's Happening in the Nation?



You are encouraged to add your own stories of answered prayer anytime here: www.eternalwall.org.uk/testimony (they will be viewed on the Wall using technology).. Click on the video below (or access the website), to see frequently asked questions about submitting the stories:



Come visit and prayer walk the land!



If interested to have a day away to retreat, reflect and pray individually, or in a group, contact your Regional Champion in Cardiff, South Wales: emelyne@hotmail.co.uk. The UK-wide Church can visit from Sept 2023 – March 2024 before construction gets underway, with opening in 2026. **Latest news at:** www.eternalwall.org.uk/news.






I pray that God the source of hope will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him."

Romans 15:13




I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart. I will recount all your wonderful deeds."

Psalms 9:1



We can make our own plans, but the Lord gives the right answer"

Proverbs 16:1 NLT





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**For enquiries:
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